



has given us to work and glorify Him. Even if we are talking about the influence we have on people around us, we all have a responsibility to use these things, abilities, and opportunities for influence to the fullest. That means that we can't view these things as *ours* alone, but as things given to us for a time. In other

the perspective that all things that we have in this life are simply a trust given to us by God. That means that we must answer to God for how we have used the things of this life. Whether we are talking about material things such as our homes, cars, and clothing, or the abilities that God

words, we *have* them but in recognition of the fact that they belong to God we live as if we do not *possess* them.

May God help us to make each of these perspectives upon life a part of our view of the world around us and how we see our own lives in service to Him.



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Faithful Sayings

BULLETIN
 OF THE
 OLSEN PARK
 CHURCH OF
 CHRIST

“From Now On”

By Kyle Pope

Paul's letters encourage us towards a spiritual perspective on life that rises above what our eyes can see, and our hands can touch. The Apostle calls us to higher things that are eternal. His life demonstrates itself as an example of this very quest. In the face of hardship his thoughts turn to hope, joy, and the things that lies ahead.

In the seventh chapter of his first great letter to the Corinthian church Paul urges brethren towards this view of the world. He writes, **“But this I say, brethren, the time is short, so that from now on even those who have wives should be as though they had none, those who weep as though they did not weep, those who rejoice as though they did not rejoice, those who buy as though they did not possess, and those who use this world as not misusing it. For the form of this world is passing away”** (7:29-31, NKJV). Let's consider briefly the peculiar perspective on life this passage teaches.

Those Who Have Wives. Our devotion to our families is a powerful bond. It is a bond that should never be easily set aside. At the same time, a commitment to Christ is some-

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM
 9:30 AM
 10:30 AM
 Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Patrick Ledbetter
 Brady McAlister
 Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Ben Hight
 Blake McAlister
 Walker McAnear
 Sam Nunn
 Lance Purcell
 Justin Smiley
 Trevor Yontz

Evangelists:

Austin Byers
 Kyle Pope

thing that must take precedence over even this important relationship. If a wife, husband, or other family members make demands of us that would violate the will of God we must refuse their demands in obedience to God. When Paul writes that those with wives “**should be as though they had none**” (7:29), he is not encouraging neglect of family, rather he is teaching us that the Christian perspective places Christ as Lord of our lives at all times. Our responsibility to serve our families is only truly fulfilled when we serve our God first.

The world around us has no higher authority—or rather, they do not recognize the authority that is over them. As a result, the world’s commitment to family is the highest commitment our world recognizes. When the Christian submits to Jesus as Lord, he or she begins to live (in a sense) as if he or she has no mate. That doesn’t mean the Christian ignores his or her responsibility to a mate. Instead, by serving the Lord first the Christian husband and Christian wife will produce the best and most lasting marital relationship possible.

Those Who Weep. Christians can have a wonderfully unique view of life. At any time in our lives we can find good cause both to rejoice (even though we experience things that make us sad), or we can find cause to weep (when others are joyous in blissful ignorance of their sin). This is not a mark of mental instability, but a result of a spiritual perspective on life.

Imagine that the worst possible thing that could plague your life happens. Perhaps it is the death of a family member, a painful illness, a terrible disaster, or even persecution. Do you as a Christian have reason *not to weep*? Absolutely! Can any of those things change your relationship with God? Do any of those things rob you of

the hope of joy, rest, and peace with God in the age to come? Not unless we allow them to!

Paul told the Romans, through the Holy Spirit—**“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord”** (Rom. 8:35-39). Paul says (in essence) even though you experience things that give you reasons to weep as a Christian you can look at life as though you did not weep.

Those Who Rejoice. Most of us would prefer not to have this particular perspective on life—that is, the perspective of denying joy! We all find enough reasons that life tries to rob us of joy from day to day. Paul is not saying in this text that we should have a gloomy, depressed view of life, but rather that we should avoid being so overjoyed with life that we ignore the reasons that we have to weep.

For example, what was it that was demanded as a result of our sin? The horrible, agonizing and shameful death of Jesus on the cross! No matter how faithful we may be or how strong we have

grown in avoiding temptation we can never escape the truth that it was our sin that drove the nails through Jesus’ hands and feet and shoved the thorns upon His head!

In addition to this, all around us are those who have never recognized their own sin and their need for salvation. Should we live blissfully ignorant of the millions that stand at hell’s doorway never having known Jesus as their Savior? Should we smile as those around us face poverty, cruelty, injustice, and abuse? This is not to say that we should dwell on such things to the point of discouragement, but instead that we should have a healthy awareness of what needs to be done to encourage us to act.

Those Who Buy. The last few thoughts in our text describe an attitude that can best be described as *stewardship*. That is,



Olsen Park Church of Christ